



Public Affairs Regional Conference held in Honduras

Tegucigalpa, HONDURAS - U.S. Southern Command's (SOUTHCOM) public affairs office sponsored a regional conference here from Dec. 5 through Friday with representatives from its Army and Air Force Components and 45 participants from seven Latin America and Caribbean countries.

SOUTHCOM's public affairs office conducts many regional conferences since 2000 not only in Central American and the Caribbean but also in the Andean Region and Southern Cone. These conferences promote the exchange of public affairs doctrine while focusing on the publics' need for accurate and transparent information regarding security activities such as disaster preparation, counter-terrorism and peacekeeping.

“This specific conference has focuses on improving our public affairs capabilities in disaster preparedness. The main goal is to have our countries share lessons-learned from previous disasters by analyzing case studies and exchanging best practices,” said Raul Duany, deputy director, public affairs, SOUTHCOM.

In addition to the participants, there were several guest-speakers from various organizations such as the Center of Coordination for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPRENAC), National Committee for Response of Emergencies and Disasters



Photo by Robert Appin

BG: Brig. Gen. Nelson W. Mejia, deputy director, Honduran Joint Chiefs of Staff explains to the participants his expectations of the conference; on his right, Raul Duany, deputy director, public affairs, US Southern Command.

(CONRED), American Red Cross and private industry.

Ana R. Correa, director of communication and marketing, American Red Cross spoke on the differences and similarities between her organization and the International Red Cross and valuable lessons-learned from Hurricane Katrina. She also provided participants with practical information on how the American Red Cross conducts media campaigns for disaster preparedness and the value of having a program of spokespersons supporting humanitarian relief efforts.

“The American Red Cross has a Celebrity Cabinet who serves as ambassadors that inform the public of our efforts in certain areas. During hurricane Katrina and Rita, a lot of the celebrities immediately became involved in highlighting the work the American Red Cross was doing,” said Correa. “Some of the celebrities who

participated were Gloria Estefan, Andy Garcia, Jon Secada and Jimmy Smith,” she added.

The keynote speaker for the conference was Gigi De Mier, from De Mier and Sainz De LaMaza, who addressed crisis management which included steps for developing a communication plan. During the presentation, De Mier explained what is expected in a crisis communication plan and elaborated on how to formulate it.

“The first phase of the plan is the preparation, the second is the actual implementation, and the third is its evaluation,” said De Mier. She provided a detailed explanation of each phase which includes risk assessment, vulnerabilities and the identification of key audiences as well as personnel required during an emergency response.

Equally as important as having a plan, is having individuals that when talking to

the media are not only articulate but also do not get offended easily, she added.

“The military have certainly been improving in the field of public affairs. I have done several of these conferences and am constantly amazed at the amount of progress the public affairs officers are making in managing the media,” said De Mier. There were several important lessons-learned that were shared during the conference. These included the constant need of educating the population about disaster preparedness, maintain current the crisis communication plans, ensure media relations are ongoing and not a one-time encounter and conduct regular training sessions with all personnel to remain proficient.

US Army South and 12th Air Force South are Service Components to US Southern Command, whose offices are located in Miami.

Queridos amigos (dear Friends)



Ilvette R. Crosby, LTC, MP

Happy Holidays from (you know where). I wanted to thank you all for your emails and phone calls. I have sent a picture of me (just in case you have forgotten how I look). I'm happy to inform you all that I have lost 1 pound, (at this rate I will loose a total of 11 pounds). Anyway things have settle a little, I'm still working long ours 0730 to 2100 hrs (9 PM for none military), but this makes the days go by faster.

Felicidades y Prospero Ano Nuevo, that all your wishes may come true (well not all since I will not be able to spend Christmas will you) The good looking Puerto Rican!

Mobile Training Team



Recently, USARSO CSM Daniel Wood put together and lead a Mobile Training Team (MTT) to the country El Salvador to share Lessons Learned in the AOR of Iraq, with the Salvadoran Army. The MTT was composed of MSG Victor Rivera, USARSO DCSNG; MSG Wilfredo Gonzalez, from USARSO G-3 Operations; and Mr. Alfredo Nogueras, Southern Command Occupational Health and Safety Manager. Together they provided instruction on Composite Risk Management (CRM), Risk Assessment, Detection of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED's), Weapon proficiency, Motor Vehicle Safety, Accident Prevention, Convoy Safety and Security Operations.



USARSO Staff Judge Advocate News

The Fort Sam Houston Tax Assistance Center is now open. It is located at Bldg 133, directly behind the Staff Judge Advocate on Stanley Road. The Tax Assistance Center offers **FREE**, complete preparation (both electronic and paper filing) of all individual federal tax returns for eligible service members and their family members. Personnel eligible to file are: active duty personnel, retirees, members of the Reserve, and National Guard currently on active duty orders and the dependents of active duty personnel and retirees who have a valid military ID Card.

Hours of operation are: 0900- 1700 hours Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Tuesday and Thursday 0900 –2100 hours

Saturday 0900 – 1300 hours

Sunday - CLOSED

Clients will be seen by appointments ONLY. Call 295-1040 for an appointment.

Please bring the following items once you have a scheduled appointment:

valid military ID

Social security numbers for spouse and dependents

1099s, if applicable

1098, Mortgage interest, if applicable

IRS 1098C, Student Loan, if applicable

1099E, Stocks/mutual funds sold, if applicable

IRS 1099T, Education Credit, if applicable

Alimony/spousal support paid, if applicable

To check the status of your income tax, once they are completed and submitted for electronic fund transfer, contact the IRS at 1-800-829-1954

Deadline to file taxes is April 15, 2006, unless an extension is requested and granted. **NOTE: No tax advice will be given over the phone.**



USARSO ORPHANAGE COMMITTEE

The USARSO Orphanage Committee, chaired by Mrs. PK Keen, will hold an organizational meeting on Thursday the 9th of February at 1130 hrs at the Fort Sam Houston Club. The Orphanage Committee raises support for orphanages in Latin America. Past efforts have included a clothing drive, hygiene supplies, school supplies, and toys.

We want to plan our events for the next year and we could use your help. The Orphanage Committee is open to everyone related to USARSO and 470th MI, military, civilian employees, contractors, and family members. We can use your help.

We would like you to join us for lunch (dutch treat) and we will map out a plan for helping our Orphanages. Please come!

USARSO Community News Publication Dates

Publication date

March 3, 2006

April 7, 2006

Submit by date

Feb 22, 2006

Mar 30, 2006



Please submit information you would like to have included in the USARSO Newsletter to sandra.ramey@samhouston.army.mil

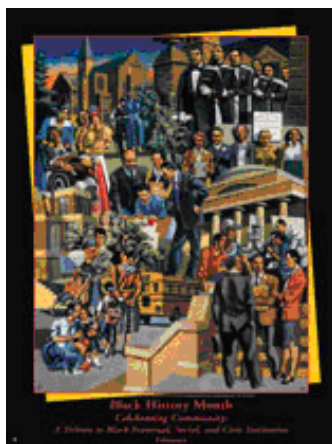
AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

February

The Civil Rights Acts of the 1960s were great breakthroughs. Not only did they afford African-Americans legal rights that every American should have, they provided for enforcement of the anti-discrimination laws of the federal government. By the early 1970s, the military had instituted directives, policies, and training on race relations and equal opportunity.

African-American History Month Luncheon:

Location: Roadrunner



Date: 14 Feb 06

Time: 1130-1300

Guest speaker: BG Granger

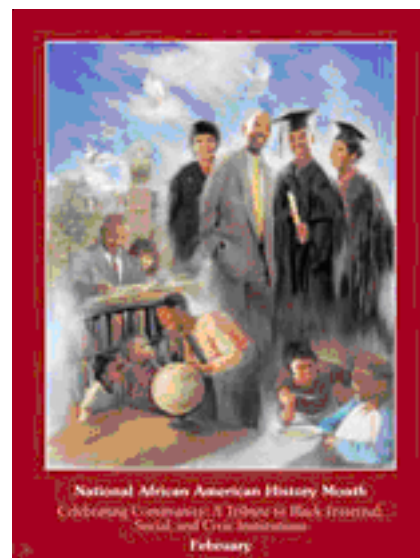
Price: TBD

Menu: TBD

Poc: Your local Equal Opportunity Advisor

More information can be obtained from the sources located at the links below:

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) <http://www.naacp.org>
 National Urban League <http://www.nul.org>
 Blacks in Government (BIG) <http://www.bignet.org>



AOL Black Voices: Black History Month: Dearly Departed Gallery 2005

Upcoming Training:

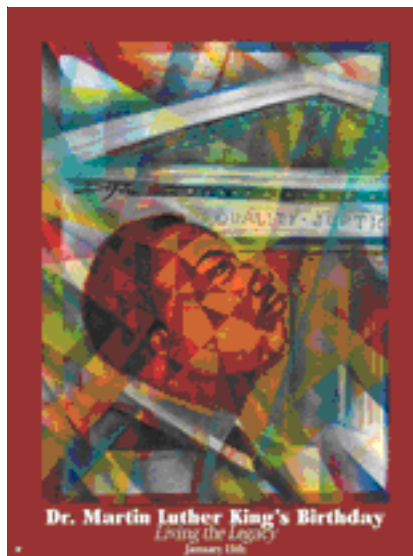
Equal Opportunity Representative Course (EORC), 10-21 Apr 06 (Poc USARSO EOA)

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR

3rd Monday in January

Twenty years after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. proclaimed to the world his dream for equality, Public Law 98-144 was enacted, designating the third Monday in January as a Federal holiday commemorating Dr. King's birthday. The King Holiday honors the life and contributions of America's greatest champion of racial justice and equality, the leader who not only dreamed of a color-blind society, but who also led a movement that achieved historic reforms to help make it a reality. George Washington is the only other American whose birthday has been designated as a Federal holiday.

Martin Luther King, Jr. <http://www.thekingcenter.com>





UNITED STATES ARMY SOUTH
USARSO

Check out the USARSO Web site for news and information! Go to

<http://www.usarso.army.mil>

you can contact the USARSO Webmasters by sending an email to

usarsowebmaster@samhouston.army.mil

Driving In the Rain

Do you know when it's most dangerous when driving in the rain?

Driving in San Antonio is a hazardous activity in the best of times, but when it starts to rain it is extra dangerous. Whether you call it hydroplaning or aquaplaning or even Texas black ice, it's just plain scary.

Losing control of your car on wet pavement is a frightening experience. Unfortunately, it can happen unless you take preventive measures.



You can prevent skids by driving slowly and carefully, especially on curves. Steer and brake with a light touch. When you need to stop or slow, do not brake hard or lock the wheels and risk a skid. Maintain mild pressure on the brake pedal.

If you do find yourself in a skid, remain calm, ease your foot off the gas, and carefully steer in the direction you want the front of the car to go. For cars without anti-lock brakes, avoid using your brakes. This procedure, known as "steering into the skid," will bring the back end of your car in line with the front. If your car has ABS, brake firmly as you "steer into the skid."

While skids on wet pavement may be frightening, hydroplaning is completely nerve-wracking. Hydroplaning happens when the water in front of your tires builds up faster than your car's weight can push it out of the way. The water pressure causes your car to rise up and slide on a thin layer of water between your tires and the road. At this point, your car can be completely out of contact with the road, and you are in danger of skidding or drifting out of your lane, or even off the road.

To avoid hydroplaning, keep your tires properly inflated, maintain good tread on your tires and replace them when necessary, slow down when roads are wet, and stay away from puddles. Try to drive in the tire tracks left by the cars in front of you.

If you find yourself hydroplaning, do not brake or turn suddenly. This could throw your car into a skid. Ease your foot off the gas until the car slows and you can feel the road again. If you need to brake, do it gently with light pumping actions. If your car has anti-lock brakes, then brake normally; the car's computer will mimic a pumping action, when necessary.

A defensive driver adjusts his or her speed to the wet road conditions in time to avoid having to use any of these measures!

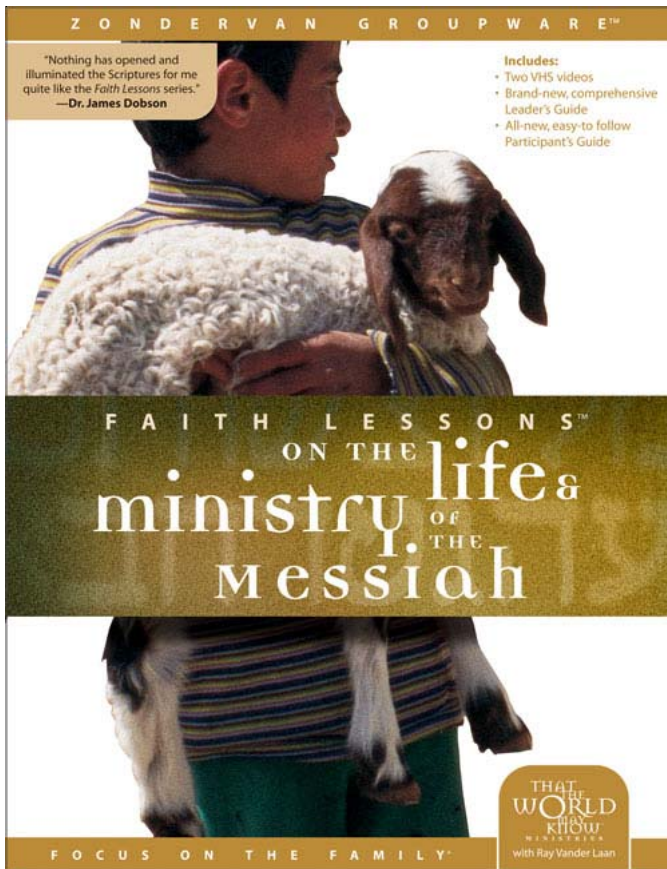
We all know that it's dangerous and that we can lose control of the car but do you know why it happens and what you can do?

The below link will provide additional information to assist you with using the risk management process when you decide to drive in rainy weather.. Make it a family affair and share this information with all the drivers in your house.

"OWN THE EDGE".

MORE TIPS (make a hyperlinks)

<http://www.smartmotorist.com/rai/rai.htm>



USARSO & 470th Bible Study

Beginning 7th & 8th February
1145 to 1245 USARSO conf. room
470th will host Tuesday's
USARSO will host Wednesday's

The study is 8 week on the following sessions:

- In the Shadow of Herod
- My Rock & My Fortress
- The Time had Fully Come
- No Greater Love
- The Rabbi
- Language of Culture
- Misguided Faith
- Living Water

Lunch is provided, but bring your drink.

You are welcome to attend Tuesdays or

Wednesdays same sessions.

BUILDING STRONG & READY FAMILIES

Sponsored By USARSO & 470th Chaplains

- *A weekend seminar dedicated to enrich your marriage and your relationship with your spouse*

PLACE: TBD

Dates: Friday, FEB 24 (1300) to Saturday Noon, FEB 25

(Quality time for couples included in schedule; 8 hours of training in reducing conflicts)

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL: Chaplains office 295-6159/6241// POC Chaplain Jett or Chaplain Chapman 470th at 295-6885.

Childcare will be provided but you must let the chaplains know ahead of time with age etc...

COST: None

Who: All married couples from USARSO/470th; first 15 who sign up.

JTFB Happenings

Change of Responsibility



Photos by TSgt Neil Spann

COL Ned Woolfolk, Joint Task Force-Bravo commander, passes the JTF-Bravo guidon to Command Sergeant Major Fernando Rodriguez during a Change of Responsibility ceremony Jan. 19. CSM Rodriguez replaced CSM Richard Montcalm as JTF-Bravo Command Sergeant Major.



Photo by Martin Chahin

Lifesaving Training – Sgt. 1st Class Damien Siwik and Staff Sgt. Jorge Hernandez from JTF-Bravo's Medical Element teamed up with JTF-Bravo fire inspector Hebert Gaekel in early January to train local Honduran firefighters on removing victims with spinal injuries from vehicle accidents. The training not only fostered local relationships, but ensured all parties are better prepared to respond to accident scenes.



Combat Dining-In

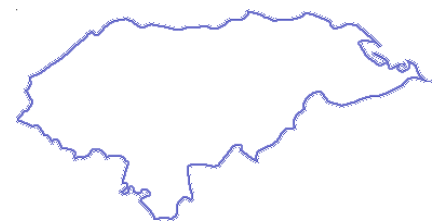
Members of Joint Task Force-Bravo show unit spirit during December's Combat Dining-In at Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras.

Guatemala Support



Photo by 1st Lt. Ali Tedesco

Guatemala villagers unload critical supplies from a 1-228th helicopter after Hurricane Stan devastated the country in October. Joint Task Force-Bravo provide flood relief by delivering much needed food, water and medical supplies to remote villages cut off by the storm.



USARSO Command Sergeant Major Bids Farewell

The success of Theater Security Cooperation and Engagement has to start with a team that demonstrates those traits inherent to that process. USARSO is that team and exudes those traits. Kelly and I have had the honor to serve a short two years with a team that has been influencing and changing the course of this hemisphere for many years.

Although we came to serve, we for the most part have been on the receiving end of friendships, blessings and the honor of being part of a team that does so much in this area of the world. It was initially obvious that if we were to gain an appreciation for the culture of Latin America, we did not need to travel down range, all that was needed was to walk the halls of USARSO and meet the people who are and Fraternity".

We can only hope that we have been able as compared to what we as we depart the command to contribute a small portion have received. We are experience and knowledge as it pertains to engaging Although many have seen politics and governments over the years, it is obvious moving toward a downward apply to ongoing US relations. As service



members face the daily challenges of combat and nation building in Iraq and Afghanistan, the USARSO team faces the daily challenge to influence a region and set conditions for regional peace and stability for decades to come.

The only thing that needs to happen for a downward spiral to continue is for the great people of USARSO to do nothing... which has not happened in the past and surely will not mark the future. I depart here, trained and ready for my responsibilities as the Combined Forces Command Afghanistan, Command Sergeant Major, due to all I have learned from so many of you over the past 24 months. Once again, Kelly and I feel honored to have been part of such a great team and to have made so many new friends.

The good Lord has directed us to the next patrol base but we will not forget the trail back to USARSO. We will begin our road march on 18 February back to our home at 1484 McGill Road, Vass NC 28394. Once I have helped Kelly set up base operations, I will move on to Kabul, Afghanistan for follow on operations. Dios te bendigo y buena suerta to all.

CSM Dan & Kelly Wood

Conference of American Armies Initiates the 27th Cycle

Formed in 1960 at the request of the U.S. State department, the Conference of American Armies is the only forum for Western Hemisphere Army Commanders to discuss issues of mutual interest. The CAA is designed to promote cohesion, improve hemispheric security, and strengthen Inter-American friendships. It consists of 20 member armies, 5 observer armies, and two military international organizations of the Western Hemisphere.

The Conference of American Armies (CAA) will initiate its 27th cycle with an inauguration ceremony on 17 March 2006 in Brazil. The office of the Permanent Executive Secretariat of the CAA will be headed by General Francisco Roberto de Albuquerque, Commander of the Brazilian Army and President of XXVII CAA; Brigadier General Paulo Chagas, 5th Deputy Chief for the Army (International Affairs) and General Secretary of XXVII CAA; and Colonel (Inf) Paulo Sergio Augusto Do Amaral, Permanent Executive Secretary XXVII Conference of American Armies, of the Brazilian Army. During this ceremony, the Army of Argentina, the present Permanent Executive Secretariat of the CAA in Buenos Aires, will hand over the administration responsibilities of the CAA to the Army of Brazil. COL

Amaral, Executive Secretary, is no stranger to the CAA, having served as Brazil's Liaison Officer for over five years, he has also collaborated extensively with the U.S Army on many CAA practical initiatives and will be instrumental to further enhance the CAA Program objectives.

The cycle will also kick off a significant enhancement of the Conference of American Armies (CAA) Website (<http://www.redcea.org>), which is jointly operated between the Permanent Executive Secretariat of the CAA and the Conference of American Armies Liaison Office, located at USARSO. The website has recently completed a major upgrade including both hardware and software capabilities. These improvements will result in faster response, a more secure network and a better quality of service. This major undertaking, which was developed over a span of one year, was successfully implemented by the CAA Network administration team composed of: Mr. Manuel Espendez (Systems Administrator), Mr. See T. Tommee (Webmaster) and Mr. Javier Castro Callejo (Developer) from our USARSO team. Along with the hardware / software upgrades a new and greatly improved CAA members' website is being added. The new website will provide a more efficient

database driven engine, with more dynamic and more advanced capabilities to meet today's technology.

The next XXVII CAA cycle (2006-2007) includes the following events which were approved by the Army Commanders of the American Armies in November 2005

Specialized Conference Host ArmyDate

Procedures
USA

1-5 May 2006

Science & Technology
Argentina
June 2006

Education & Training
Bolivia
Sep 2006

Disaster Relief /Exercise
Venezuela
March 2007

Logistics
El Salvador
May 2007

Peacekeeping Operations Exercise
Uruguay
June 2007